Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Program:
Structured Removal
FAQs for Owners and Residents

Why did you pick these blocks for structured removal?

- Similar to other areas around the city, most of the ash trees on these streets were found in general to be declining from other non-EAB causes (drought? construction injury? other?).

Is this a special assessment-will I be billed for it?

- No, you will not get an extra bill or assessment for this work.
- The removals, stump removals and replanting will be funded out of a grant from the State of Minnesota, Forest Protection Reserve, through the Department of Agriculture.

Why are you removing live trees?

- While the ash trees on these streets are still alive, almost all have been found to be in a general state of decline that will not be reversed.
- Declining ash trees in St. Paul will be maintained less and removed more aggressively in coming years due to the existence and inevitability of the fatal EAB spread.
- Unlike Dutch elm disease, EAB does not discriminate; it kills all native ash trees.
- The ash trees in St Paul are estimated to compose about 30% of the total tree canopy, with over 30,000 on street boulevards alone. In order to mitigate the effects of EAB, structured removal of live but declining trees beginning now will reduce the number of dead trees standing in the future; it also helps spread out the cost and effort of removing thousands of trees in a shorter period of time.
- Delaying Saint Paul's effort to begin managing the ash tree population potentially threatens not only the region but the entire state. Minnesota has the second most ash in the nation at an estimated 937 million.

Why can't you wait for our trees to die before removing them?

- Dead ash trees are a hazard and a liability.
- While possible, waiting is not the best management practice nor does it help with the mitigation of EAB spread.
- If delayed until the trees are dead there will be no guarantee as to the timeliness of future tree and stump removal, and replanting of replacement trees. It is all dependent upon future budgets, which we cannot realistically forecast.
- When EAB takes off, it will be difficult to budget enough resources to mitigate the effects in a short period of time which is why beginning now and spreading out the process rather than waiting for trees to die is prudent.
- Based on experience of other states, we will not be able to remove trees fast enough once the infestation inevitably gets out of control, which is anticipated within 3 to 5 years.

Why not save the trees with insecticide treatments?

- The city may use EAB pesticides in the future to treat a small percentage of select specimen ash trees on case-by-case basis, however, none of the trees on these streets warrant the ongoing annual or biannual expense of such treatment.
- Widespread use of any pesticides to control EAB is not expected in the current management plan due to ongoing expense of treatments, the uncertainty of long-term efficacy of the pesticides, and for concerns about the continual introduction of pesticides into the environment and their possible effects (bioaccumulation).

What will this do to my property value?

- City officials view this project as a value-increasing opportunity for the following reasons:
  - The ash trees are declining on these blocks and the canopy is not what it used to be nor will it return to such.
  - Planting of new trees provides your blocks a head start over other areas with large ash populations.

- While a definite loss in the short-term, including less shade/canopy as new trees do not provide much, there will be trees.
- As part of this project, stumps will be removed as quickly as possible (weather dependent). Otherwise, there is currently a backlog of about 4,000 stumps to which yours would be added in coming years if trees were removed at a later date.
- Large, dead trees do not increase property values. It is not a question of if, but when your ash will succumb to EAB. It may take 10 years or 5 years or two – no one knows. However, if replaced now, you likely will have a substantial new tree in 10 years rather than a dead ash tree.

If this is about EAB, then why aren't you removing trees where you know it is?

- The ongoing response to EAB infested ash trees is aggressive; they are promptly removed and will continue to be removed as they are identified.
- Other strategies to control the spread of EAB from the known infested area for as long a time as possible are being utilized.
- Leaving live, non-EAB ash trees in the infested South St. Anthony neighborhood is a strategy to contain EAB in the area as long as possible. If ash trees are removed, adult beetles run out of potential food and egg-laying sites causing them to spread further more quickly.

What is the city doing to avoid the wide spread loss of trees in the future?

- There will always be incidents of disease and pests that target our trees and that are out of our control.
- This is especially true with today's global market where non-native pests and pathogens are introduced to our area.
- The City is attempting to fight the widespread loss of trees by replanting with a wider variety of replacement trees, and using strategies that avoid the planting of monocultures for entire blocks.
- Using such strategies will hopefully reduce the future loss of entire blocks of trees to any single ailment.

Project Overview:

- **Removal of all ash trees on streets identified.**
- **Grinding of all stumps (new and old) on those blocks.**
- **Diversified replanting of all available sites (dependent upon utility locations) with 2" trees of a variety of species.**
- **New trees will be mulched and green Gatorbags will be installed so that home owners can easily assist with watering of the new trees.**